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Tow Law Urban District Council

REPORT

of the

Medical Officer of Health

1937.

Tow Law Urban District

Annual Report

OF THE

Medical Officer of Health

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To the Chairman and Members of the Tow Law Urban District Council.

I have pleasure in presenting to you the Annual Report upon the conditions which have prevailed in your Area during the year 1937.

The report is an "Ordinary" one and is limited to a record of alterations: improvements or developments which have taken place during the year with the exception of those items where full particulars are requested by the Ministry of Health.

Section A.

Statistics and Social Conditions of the Area.

Area. 477 acres.

Population.

Resident Population Mid-1937 (Registrar General) 3280.

Number of Inhabited Houses.

According to the rate books at the end of 1937—928.

Rateable Value.

Some £7698.

Product of 1d. Rate. £28.

Public Health Officers of the Authority:

Medical Officer of Health:—District Medical Officer: Public Vaccinator, M.O. to Post Office and Police.

S. A. Charlton, M.B., B.S., M.R., San. I.
Grove Lodge, Tow Law.

Sanitary Inspector and Surveyor:

Mr. T. Rowell-Brown, M.R., San. I., M. Inst., M. & Cy. E.
36 Bridge Street, Tow Law.

Social and Industrial Conditions.

There has been no marked change during the year and a pressing need still remains for the development of the coal deposits in the area, and more especially for the establishment of industry apart from coal mining. A favourable feature is an increase in the number of men and boys who have found employment at the Wolsingham Steel Works.

On the other hand there are definite evidences of migration and a tendency for men to seek employment at a distance from Tow Law.

Housing conditions have been improved as a result of your Housing Scheme but a great deal remains to be done in regard to the provision of bathrooms, water carriage and hot water system in the older houses.

An Army Camp was established during the Summer and it was stated that 'the invigorating air at Tow Law has had a wonderful effect upon the health of the troops.'

Vital Statistics.

		Total	M	F
Live Births	Legitimate ...	43	20	23
	Illegitimate ...	4	1	3

Birth-rate per 1000 of the estimated resident population was 14·33.

Still Births—4. 1 male. 3 female.

Rate per 1000 total (live and still) births—40·81.

Deaths—Total 53. 25 male. 28 female.

Death-rate per 1000 of the estimated resident population 16·15

Death-rate after adjustment by Areal Comparability Factor 17·11

Death from puerperal causes—nil.

Death rate of infants under one year of age.

All infants per 1000 live births ... 85·1

Legitimate infants per 1000 legitimate live births 93·02.

Illegitimate infants per 1000 illegitimate live births—nil.

Deaths from Cancer (all ages) 5.

Deaths from Measles (all ages) nil.

Deaths from Whooping Cough (all ages) nil.

Deaths from Diarrhoea (under 2 years of age) 1.

Section B.

General Provision of Health Services for the Area.

1 Public Health Offices. See beginning of the Report.

2 Laboratory Facilities. No change.

3 Ambulance Facilities.

Ambulance maintained by private subscription.
Service adequate.

4 Nursing in the Home.

County Midwife—Miss Redhead, Hill Terrace, Tow Law.

District Nurse—Mrs. Corbett, High Street, Tow Law.

5 Treatment Centres and Clinics. No change.

6 Hospitals. No change.

Section C.

Sanitary Circumstances of the Area.

1 (1) Water.

In certain areas in your district the water supply could be better. As a result of the installation of a new main near High Stoop an increase of pressure has been obtained in the North side of the town, but the pressure in the town to the South of the railway crossing could, with advantage, be improved. No doubt a contributory factor lies in the corrosion and partial occlusion of the pipes leading in to certain properties. In connection with the Housing estate a new main has been installed.

(2) Drainage and Sewerage.

Fresh sewerage continues to be installed at the Housing Estate.

2 Rivers and Streams.

There are no rivers in the area, nor has there been any pollution of streams.

3 (1) Closet Accommodation.

Ash-pit privies converted into ash-closets—nil.
Ash-pit privies converted into water-closets—nil.
Ash-closets converted into water-closets— nil.

Number of closets of each type remaining at the end of 1937.

Water-closets	...	...	125
Ash-closets	...	...	555
Ashpit Privies	...	...	22

The favourable feature of the increase in the number of Water Closets is in the main due to your Housing Scheme.

(2) Public Cleansing. No change.

Enclosed tips for the reception of dry refuse have been leased for 10 years and are situated on Cornsay Fell and in the Whinney Fields.

(3) Sanitary Inspection of the Area.

(a) PUBLIC HEALTH ACTS.

DWELLING HOUSES.

Informal Written Notices 13. Nuisances abated 11.

DEPOSITS OF REFUSE & MANURE.

Informal Written Notices 15. Nuisances abated 15.

WATER CLOSETS.

Informal Written Notices 1. Nuisances abated 1.

HOUSE DRAINAGE. Defective Traps.

Informal Written Notices 5. Nuisances abated 5.

Other Faults Informal Written Notices 6.
Nuisances abated 4.

ANIMALS IMPROPERLY KEPT.

Informal Written Notices 1. Nuisances abated 1.

Houses disinfected after Infectious disease ...	82
New Houses erected during the year	54
Number of such Houses occupied during year ...	54

(4) Shops. No action taken.

(5) Smoke Abatement. No action taken.

(6) Swimming Baths and Pools.

There are no swimming baths or pools in your area. There has been a proposal to establish a swimming pool in connection with the Social Service Centre and a bacteriological examination of the water proposed to be utilised has been satisfactory.

(7) Eradication of Bed Bugs. No action taken.

4 Schools.

No change. The closet accommodation of the Church of England School is in need of improvement particularly in the matter of drainage.

Section D. Housing.

During the year considerable progress has been made. 54 new houses have been occupied. 4 as the result of private enterprise and 50 through the medium of the North-Eastern Housing Association.

1. Inspection of dwelling houses during the year :—
   (1) (a) Total number of dwelling houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts) 306
   (b) Number of inspections made for the purpose 306

(2) (a) Number of dwelling houses (included under sub-head (1) above) which were inspected and recorded under the Housing Consolidated Regulations, 1925 136

(b) Number of inspections made for the purpose 209

(3) Number of dwelling houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation 119

(4) Number of dwelling houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-head) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation 7

2. Remedy of defects during the year without service of formal notices :—

Number of defective dwelling houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their Officers 35

3. Action under Statutory Powers during the year :

(a).—Proceedings under sections 9, 10 and 16 of the Housing Act, 1936 :—

(1) Number of dwelling houses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs ... Nil

(2) Number of dwelling houses which were rendered fit after service of formal notices :—

(a) By Owners ... ... —

(b) By Local Authority in default of owners ... —

(b).—Proceedings under Public Health Acts :—

(1) Number of dwelling houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied ... ... Nil

(2) Number of dwelling houses in which defects were remedied after service of formal notices :—

(a) By Owners ... ... —

(b) By Local Authority in default of owners ... —

(c).—Proceedings under sections 11 & 13 of the Housing Act, 1936 :—

(1) Number of dwelling houses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made ... ... Nil

(2) Number of dwelling houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders ... ... Nil

(d).—Proceedings under section 12 of the Housing Act, 1936 :—

(1) Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were made ... ... —

(2) Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were determined, the tenement or room having been rendered fit ... ... —

4. Number of overcrowding cases from 'B' survey December 1936 137

Less—(a) To be covered by action under Housing Act, 1930...31
(b) Cases abated after removals: Changed family circumstances since 'B' survey was made ... 5
(c) Possible alternative accommodation which may arise under 'chain of development' 16

52

Net overcrowding ... 85 cases.

Of the 31 cases under (a)—4 from North Street were dealt with during 1937. 1 from Harrison Street was dealt with during 1937. 1 from Forge Cottages left the district.

Of the 16 cases under (c)—Spare houses of the First Housing Scheme resulted in the abatement of 3.

Section E. Inspection and Supervision of Food.

(*a*) Milk Supply.

Under the Milk and Dairies Order 1926 the County Council Veterinary Officer has carried out inspections during the year and reports as follows :—

(1) Visits to cowkeepers—12.
(2) Number of Cows examined—106.
(3) General condition and type of cows—good.
(4) General cleanliness of cows—fair.
(5) General conditions of sanitation—poor.
(6) Chief methods of milk disposal—retail.
(7) No. of animals slaughtered under Tuberculosis Order :—
(*a*) Tuberculosis of udder or giving T.B. milk ... Nil
(*b*) Other forms of Tuberculosis ... ... Nil
(8) No. of cases of diseases other than Tuberculosis ... Nil

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS.

The general hygiene in this district is poor except in one case where the premises have been brought up to Accredited standard. I regret to report that there has been no improvement on the remainder since last year.

(*b*) Meat and other Foods. No action taken.

The slaughter-houses, &c., have been regularly inspected.

(*c*) Adulteration, &c. No action taken.

Section F. Prevalence of, and control over, Infectious and other diseases.

Incidence of Notifiable diseases (other than Tuberculosis) during 1937 —

Disease	Total cases Notified	Cases admitted to Hospital	Total Deaths
Scarlet Fever	61	61	nil
Diphtheria	40	39	6
Puerperal Pyrexia	1	—	—
Pneumonia	4	1	—
Erysipelas	1	—	—

During the year your district was visited by an epidemic of Scarlet Fever. A very large factor in its control was the efficient service rendered by the Helmington Row Hospital of the Auckland, Shildon and Willington Joint Hospital Board.

In common with the rest of the area Diphtheria was prevalent more especially towards the end of the year and resulted in 6 deaths.

In furtherance of your scheme of Artificial Immunisation against Diphtheria 122 children were immunised. Of this number one case came under Section 133 of the Public Health Act 1875 which restricts the provision of free treatment to children of the poorer classes.

Notifiable Diseases (other than Tuberculosis) during year 1937.

Analysis of the total notified cases according to age.

Age	Scarlet Fever	Diphtheria	Puerperal Pyrexia	Erysipelas	Pneumonia
Under 1 year	—	—	—	—	—
1—2 years	1	—	—	—	—
2—3 ,,	—	1	—	—	—
3—4 ,,	5	4	—	—	—
4—5 ,,	6	4	—	—	—
5—10 ,,	19	15	—	—	—
10—15 ,,	17	12	—	—	—
15—20 ,,	8	1	—	—	—
20—35 ,,	5	2	1	—	—
35—45 ,,	—	1	—	—	—
45—65 ,,	—	—	—	1	3
65 years and over		—	—	—	1

Prevention of Blindness. No action taken.

Tuberculosis. New cases and Mortality during 1937.

Age Periods	New Cases				Deaths			
	Respiratory		Non-respiratory		Respiratory		Non-respiratory	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
0								
1								
5				1				
15								
25								
35	1			1		1		
45						1		
55	1							1
65 and upwards				1				
Total ...	2			3		2		1

I remain,

Your most obedient servant,

A. CHARLTON, M.B., B.S.